1. (Currently amended) A game and messenger client server system, comprising:

a plurality of game clients;

a game server including logic to operate a multiplayer game using inputs from and outputs to an

active game set of game clients including the plurality of game clients, wherein game clients other than

those in the active game set can join an active game by supplying the game server with a reference to the

active game;

a plurality of messenger clients;

a messenger server including logic to forward messages from a sender messenger client to a

receiving messenger client;

logic to couple a game client to a messenger client to allow the game client to send the messenger

client data used to initiate joining a game, whereby a message sent by the messenger client includes the data

used to initiate joining a game, and wherein the data in the message sent by the messenger client comprises

a command line executable for an invitee client to connect to the game server; and

logic to initiate a join of a game at [[an]] the invitee client, using data received in a message to the

invitee.

2.-7. (Canceled)

8. (Original) The game and messenger client server system of claim 1, further comprising an

icon that indicates a state of an inviter client.

9. (Original) The game and messenger client server system of claim 8, wherein the icon is a

game-specific icon.

10. (Original) The game and messenger client server system of claim 1, further comprising logic to

generate a data file sent in response to a request from the invitee client.

11.-16. (Canceled)

17. (Currently amended) A method of operating a multi-player game having a plurality of game clients and a plurality of messenger clients, the plurality of game clients and plurality of messenger clients in communication with a game server and a messenger server, the method comprising:

joining the game by sending a reference to the game to the game server;

sending, from an inviter game client to an inviter messenger client, data used to initiate joining the game;

sending a message including the data used to initiate joining the game to the messenger server; routing the message to an invite messenger client; and

using the data in the routed message to invoke a game client and join the game, wherein the data sent from the inviter game client and included in the routed message further comprises a command line and a registry entry for the invitee messenger client to invoke the game client and connect to the game server.

- 18. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising sending, from the game server to the inviter game client, a reference used to join the game.
- 19. (Previously presented) The method of claim 17, further comprising sending the message to a list of messenger clients associated with the inviter messenger client,

wherein an updated state is perceptible by a user of the invitee messenger client.

- 20. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising updating a state of an icon associated with the inviter messenger client in response to receiving the message.
- 21.-22. (Canceled)
- 23. (Original) The method of claim 17, further comprising sending a request for a game data file to the game server.

24. (Original) The method of claim 23, wherein the game data file includes a reference to the game locally.

25.-27. (Canceled)

28. (Currently amended) A method of operating a multi-player game having an inviter client, an invite client, and a server, the method comprising:

invoking an inviter game client at the inviter client;

connecting the inviter game client to the game by sending a reference to the game to the server:

creating a message at the inviter client containing data used for invoking an invitee game client and for joining the game;

routing the message to the invitee client; and

using the data in the message to invoke the invitee game client and join the game, wherein the data in the message created at the inviter client further comprises a reference to a registry at the invitee client that is common to the inviter game client.

- 29. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein creating the message comprises creating the message at the inviter client.
- 30. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein routing the message is by using TCP/IP.
- 31. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28, wherein creating the message comprises creating the message at the server.
- 32. (Previously presented) The method of claim 28, further comprising sending the message to a second server.
- 33. (Currently amended) A game and messenger client server system, comprising:

a plurality of game clients including an inviter and an invitee game client;

- a plurality of messenger clients including an inviter and invitee messenger client;
- a server including logic to operate a multiplayer game using inputs from and outputs to an active game set of game clients of the plurality of game clients, wherein game clients other than those in the active game set can join an active game by supplying the server with a reference to the active game;

logic to couple the inviter game client to the inviter messenger client to allow the inviter game client to send the inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, whereby a message sent by the inviter messenger client includes the data used to initiate joining a game; and

logic to initiate a join of a game at the invitee game client, using data received in a message to the invitee messenger client, wherein the data received in the message to the invitee messenger client further comprises a registry entry from the inviter game client that is usable for handling invitee client-specific details for the initiation of the joining of the game,

wherein the inviter messenger client includes logic to forward messages to the invitee messenger client.

34. (Canceled)

35. (Currently amended) A method for providing a multi user networked computing environment, the method using an activity server and a messenger server, where the activity server and the messenger server are configured to communicate with a plurality of user computer systems, the user computer system including an activity client where the user computer system executes a user interface operated by a human user and is further configured to engage an activity using the activity client, wherein the user interface includes a display device and a user input device, wherein the user computer system is coupled to a network for exchanging information with the activity server and the messenger server, the method comprising:

accepting signals from the user input device to, engage the activity using the activity client;

presenting one or more preferences to the user computer system, where the one or more preferences are associated with activities;

selecting at least one preference to join the activity;

invoking the selected activity with a first messenger client;

providing to the messenger server a user state and a reference to the activity in which the user is participating, wherein the reference to the activity comprises a registry key from the activity server that points to an executable to invoke the activity; and

presenting to another user associated with at least one of the plurality of user computer systems the user state and the reference to the activity.

36. (Original) The method of claim 35 further comprising:

selecting to join the user in the activity by the another user;

invoking another activity client, where the another activity client is associated with the another user; and

joining the user and the another user in a multi user activity.

- 37. (Original) A method of claim 35, wherein the activity is a game.
- 38. (Currently Amended)A <u>computer readable medium including</u> computer program <u>code</u>, <u>which</u> <u>when executed -designed to execute-</u>on a server, <u>provides for</u> having a game server and a messenger server <u>to-</u>provide a multi player computer environment, the computer program <u>code</u> comprising:

program code to accept signals from a user input device to engage a game using a game client; program code to present one or more preferences to a user computer system, where the one or more preferences are associated with games;

program code to select at least one preference to join the game;

program code to invoke the selected game with a messenger client;

program code to provide to the messenger server a user state and a reference to the game in which the user is playing, wherein the reference to the game comprises a registry key from the game client that refers to a registry storing information on a directory location for a game client executable; and

program code to present to another user associated with at least one of a plurality of user computer systems the user state and the reference to the game.

39. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program of claim 38, further comprising:

program code to select to join the user in the game by the another user;

program code to invoke another game client, where the another game client is associated with the another user; and

program code to join the user and the another user in a multi-game activity.

40. (Currently Amended) Logic executing on a for use at an invitee client to initiate joining by an invitee game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is joined, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client for receiving in at least one message from an inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, the logic comprising:

invocation logic for using the data to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server and a reference to the active game, the inviter and invitee game clients being respectively associated with the inviter and invitee messenger clients, and wherein the data further includes the reference to the game server in an invokable command line provided in the at least one message from the inviter messenger client.

- 41. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, wherein the data used to initiate joining a game includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.
- 42. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invitee client of claim 40, further comprising logic for activating the invocation logic in response to action by a user.
- 43. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, further comprising logic for displaying a buddy list of the invitee messenger client and an indication that the invitee game client may join an active game which a member of the buddy list is playing.

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44. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invitee client of claim 40, further

comprising logic for displaying a game-specific icon identifying the active game.

45. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, wherein the

invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

46. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, wherein the

invitee messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the inviter messenger and

game clients reside at a second computer system.

47. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invitee client of claim 40, further

comprising logic for sending to other messenger clients at least one message including a reference to an

active game.

48. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40 wherein the

invitee messenger client is operable to receive the at least one message via a messenger server.

49. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, further

comprising logic to read at least one registry entry usable to invoke the invitee game client.

50. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, wherein the

invitee messenger client is operable to receive at, least one message including a reference to a potential

game, the logic for use at an invite client further comprising validation logic for validating the potential

game as legitimate.

51. (Currently Amended) The logic for use executing at an invite client of claim 40, further

comprising logic for generating usage information to track game usage by the invitee game client.

52. (Previously presented) A method of operating an invitee client to initiate joining by an invitee

game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is

joined, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client for receiving in at least one message from

an inviter messenger client data used to initiate joining a game, the method comprising:

invoking the invitee game client using the data; and

connecting the invitee game client to the game server using the data, wherein the data includes a

reference to the game server and a reference to the active game, the inviter and invitee game clients

being respectively associated with the inviter and invitee messenger clients.

53. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, wherein the data includes a game server

network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the

identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

54. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising initiating joining to the

active game in response to action by a user.

55. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising displaying a buddy list of

the invitee messenger client and an indication that the invitee game client may join an active game

which a member of the buddy list is playing.

56. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising displaying a game-specific

icon identifying the active game.

57. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, wherein the invitee messenger client is

associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

58. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, wherein the invitee messenger and game clients

reside at a first computer system, and the inviter messenger and game clients reside at a second

computer system.

59. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising sending to other messenger

clients at least one message including a reference to an active game.

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- 60. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising receiving the at least one message via a messenger server.
- 61. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising reading at least one registry entry usable to invoke the invitee game client.
- 62. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising receiving at least one message including a reference to a potential game, the method further comprising validating the potential game as legitimate.
- 63. (Previously presented) The method of claim 52, further comprising generating usage information to track game usage by the invitee game client.
- 64. (Currently Amended) A computer <u>readable medium program product</u> comprising program code, <u>which when executed</u> for use at an invitee client, <u>provides</u> for initiating joining by an invitee game client to an active game that is hosted by a game server and to which an inviter game client is joined <u>by enabling actions</u>, the invitee client including an invitee messenger client that is capable of being coupled to a network to receive messages, the computer program product comprising:

program code for invoking the invitee game client using data used to initiate joining a game, wherein the data is contained in at least one message received by the invitee messenger client from an inviter messenger client, and includes a reference to the game server and a reference to the active game, wherein the data includes the reference to the active game in an invoking command line provided by the inviter game client in the at least one in the message received from the inviter messenger client; and

program code for connecting the invitee game client to the game server using the data, wherein the inviter and invitee game clients are respectively associated with the inviter and invitee messenger clients.

65. (Currently Amended) The computer <u>readable medium program product</u> of claim 64, wherein the data includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that

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identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the

identified game server.

66. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, wherein

the program code for initiating joining to the active game is operable to initiate joining to the active

game in response to action by a user.

67. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, further

comprising program code for displaying a buddy list of the invitee messenger client and an indication

that the invitee game client may join an active game which a member of the buddy list is playing.

68. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, further

comprising program code for displaying a game-specific icon identifying the active game.

69. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, wherein

the invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

70. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, wherein

the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the inviter messenger and

game clients reside at a second computer system.

71. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, further

comprising program code for sending to other messenger clients at least one message including a

reference to an active game.

72. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, wherein

the invitee messenger client is operable to receive the at least one message via a messenger server.

73. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64, further

comprising program code to read at least one registry; entry usable to invoke the invitee game client.

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74. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 64; wherein

invitee messenger client is operable to receive, at least one message including a reference to a potential

game, the computer program product further comprising program code for validating the potential game

as legitimate.

75. (Currently Amended) The computer <u>readable medium program product</u> of claim 64, further

comprising program code for generating usage information to track game usage by the invitee game

client.

76. (Currently Amended) Logic executing for operation at an inviter client, the inviter client

including an inviter game client and an inviter messenger client for sending at least one message over a

network to an invitee messenger client, the logic comprising:

logic for causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to the inviter messenger

client for inclusion in the at least one message, wherein the data enables an invitee game client

associated with the invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which the inviter game

client is joined, and wherein providing the data to the inviter messenger client further comprises:

outputting the data to a file with a file name; and

passing the file name to the inviter messenger client.

77. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 76, wherein the logic for causing the data to be

provided comprises a messaging interface..

78. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 76, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to

send the at least one message via a messenger server.

79. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 76, wherein the active game may be hosted by a game

server.

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80. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 79, wherein the data enables the invitee messenger

client to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server.

81. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 79, wherein the data includes a reference to the game

server, and a reference to the active game on the game server.

82. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 79, wherein the data includes a game server network

address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the identified

game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

83. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 76, wherein the invitee messenger client is associated

with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

84. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 83, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to

send the at least one message automatically to members of the buddy list.

85. (Previously presented) The logic of claim 76, wherein the inviter messenger and game clients

reside at a first computer system, and the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a second

computer system.

86. (Currently amended) A method for operating an inviter client, the inviter client including an

inviter game client and an inviter messenger client for sending at least one message over a network to an

invitee messenger client, the method comprising:

causing data used to initiate joining a game to be, provided to the inviter messenger client for

inclusion in the at least one message, wherein the data enables an invitee game client associated with the

invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which the inviter game client is joined, and

wherein providing the data to the inviter messenger client further comprises:

grabbing, by the inviter game client, a window handle for the inviter messenger client;

<u>and</u>

sending the inviter messenger client a registered window message with the data.

(Previously presented) The method of claim 86, wherein a messaging interface causes the data to 87.

be provided to the inviter messenger client.

88. (Previously presented) The method of claim 86, further comprising sending the at least one

message from the inviter messenger client to the invitee messenger client.

89. (Previously presented) The method of claim 86, wherein the active game may be hosted by a

game server.

90. (Previously presented) The method of claim 89, wherein the data enables the invitee messenger

client to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server.

91. (Previously presented) The method of claim 89, wherein the data includes a reference to the

game server, and a reference to the active game on the game server.

92. (Previously presented) The method of claim 89, wherein the data includes a game server

network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that identifies the active game on the

identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the identified game server.

93. (Previously presented) The method of claim 86, wherein the invitee messenger client is

associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

94. (Previously presented) The method of claim 93, further comprising the inviter messenger client

sending the at least one message automatically to members of the buddy list.

95. (Previously presented) The method of claim 86, wherein the inviter messenger and game clients

reside at a first computer system, and the invitee messenger and game clients reside at a second

computer system.

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96. (Currently Amended) A computer readable medium program product comprising program code, which when executed for operation at an inviter client, the inviter client including an inviter game client and an inviter messenger client, provides for sending at least one message over a network to an invitee messenger client by enabling actions, the computer program product comprising:

program code for causing data used to initiate joining a game to be provided to the inviter messenger client for inclusion in the at least one message, wherein the data enables an invitee game client associated with the invitee messenger client to initiate joining an active game to which the inviter game client is joined, and wherein providing the data to the inviter messenger client further comprises:

> finding, by the inviter game client, a window handle for the inviter messenger client; sending the inviter messenger client a registered window message; and getting, by the inviter messenger client, the data used to initiate joining a game.

- 97. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 96, wherein the program code for causing the data to be provided to the inviter messenger client is included in a messaging interface.
- 98. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 96, wherein the inviter messenger client is operable to send the at least one message via a messenger server.
- 99. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 96, wherein the active game may be hosted by a game server.
- 100. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 99, wherein the data enables the invitee messenger client to invoke the invitee game client and connect the invitee game client to the game server.
- 101. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product duct of claim 99, wherein the data includes a reference to the game server, and a reference to the active game on the game server.

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102. (Currently Amended)The computer <u>readable medium program product</u> of claim 99, wherein the

data includes a game server network address that identifies the game server, a game identifier that

identifies the active game on the identified game server, and a port identifier that identifies a port on the

identified game server.

103. (Currently Amended)The computer readable medium program product of claim 96, wherein the

invitee messenger client is associated with a member of a buddy list of the inviter messenger client.

104. (Currently Amended)The computer readable medium program product of claim 103, wherein the

inviter messenger client is operable to send the at least one message automatically to members of the

buddy list.

105. (Currently Amended) The computer readable medium program product of claim 96, wherein the

inviter messenger and game clients reside at a first computer system, and the invitee messenger and

game clients reside at a second computer system.